Government. Past trends indicate that the achievement of the programme improves as the financial year progresses.

(c) State Bank of India, the Convener of State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) for the State of Bihar has reported that during the SLBC meeting held on 17.1.2006, all the member Banks have been advised to issue suitable instructions to their respective branches for proactive implementation of PMRY and to take adequate steps for achieving the allocated targets within the stipulated time frame, monitor the progress and take corrective steps whenever the performance is low. Further, the overall performance in implementation and achievement of targets under the scheme is reviewed periodically at SLBC meetings.

Cracks in Sun Temple at Konark

*336. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the 12th Century Sun Temple at Konark, Orissa has developed cracks;

(b) if so, the reasons for such happening and details in this regard; and

(c) the action taken to restore/repair the Temple?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Due to inherent porous nature of the Londalite rock used for the construction of the temple, distress is noticed at the lower most row of the Super structure (Jagmohan) at the South-East side. The iron dowels provided to bind the architectural members have deteriorated and oxidization has resulted in cracks on the edges of the member. The exterior surface of the temple is also exposed to constant saline action due to salt laden winds from the sea which is another cause of deterioration.

(c) Steps are being taken to arrest the deterioration of exterior surface of the monument. These include removal of salt by paper pulp treatment, fungicidal treatment of contain micro-vegetational growth, consolidation of weathered stones and water repellent treatment, besides routine maintenance.

The cantilever members of the Super structure (Jagmohan) are supported with tubular scaffolding and stainless steel pins are used to consolidate the architectural members.

ASI fe also consulting the Central Building Research Institute for expert guidance.

Excise package for kutch area

*337. SHRIRAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to State:

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat has represented to the Central Government to extend the liberal benefits of excise package to Kutch area as has been extended to Sikkim, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Himachal P'radesh; and

(b) if so, what is the response of the Central Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir. The Chief Minister of Gujarat had requested for making applicable to Kutch district of Gujarat excise duty exemption schemes similar to those declared for Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim.

(b) The matter was examined and, taking into consideration all material facts, it was decided not to make any change in the excise duty exemption scheme applicable to Kutch district of Gujarat. The scheme is valid for units established in Kutch district until 31.12.2005.

Funds for tourism related infrastructure

*338. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has requested each Ministry to set aside a certain portion of their funds for tourism related infrastructure; and

(b) if so, the reaction of each Ministry thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Department of Tourism has not requested each Ministry to set aside a certain portion of their funds for tourism related infrastructure. However, Department of Road Transport and Highways and Planning Commission have been requested to give priority to projects providings road connectivity to major tourist destinations.

(b) Department of Road Transport and Highways and Planning Commission have responded favourably to the request.